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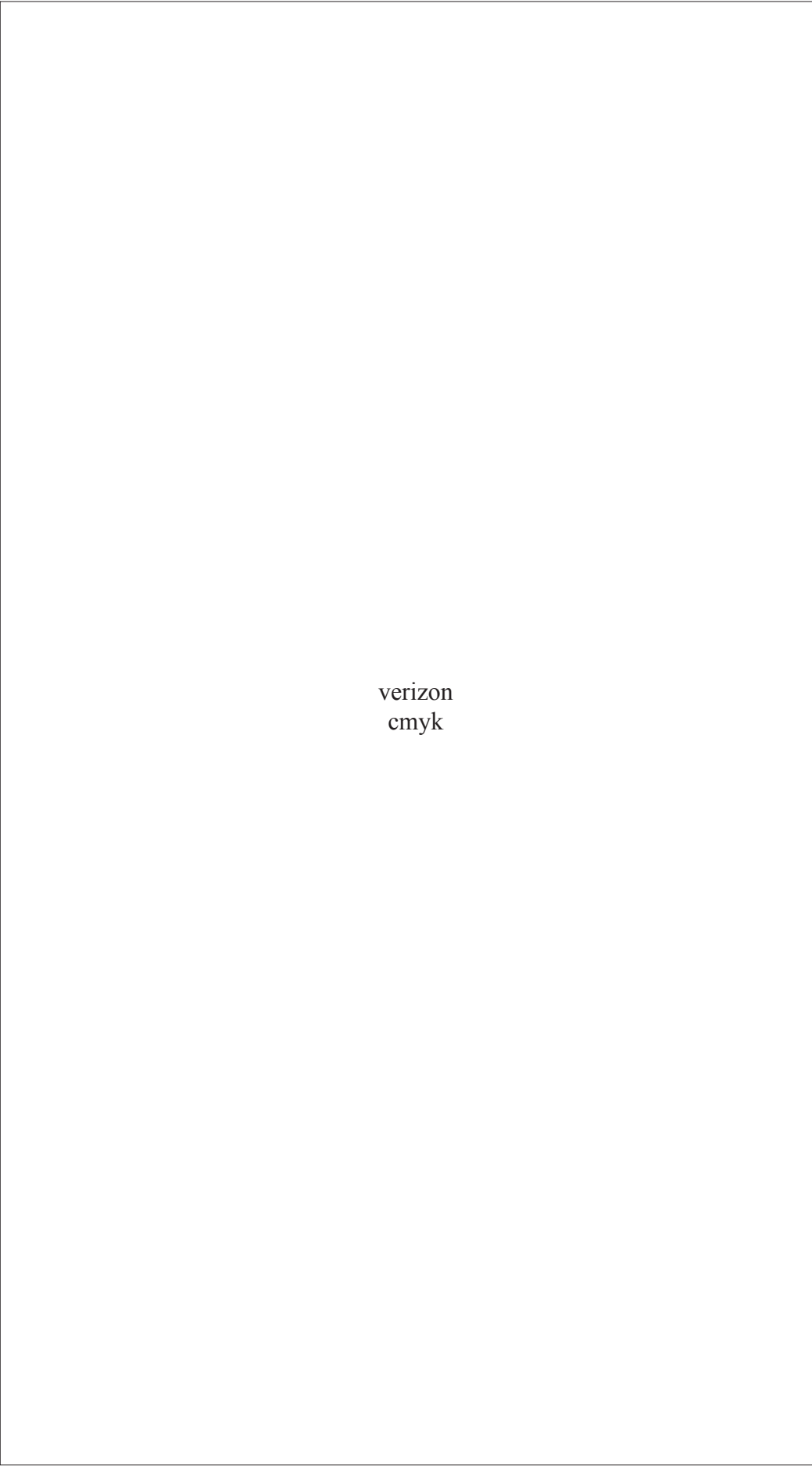
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I N S I D E

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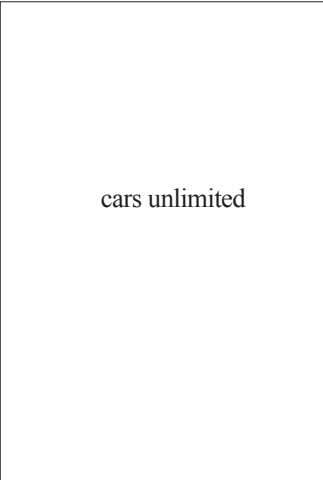
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Local





into the woods
+green
c/o donna-elite



cars unlimited



pierre rest.

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE				
Airline	DT	DT	Frequency	
San Jose				
PRR 100	3:00am	8:00am	Daily	
San Francisco				
PRR 100	4:00am	9:00am	Daily	
San Jose				
PRR 100	8:00am	12:00pm	Daily	
San Francisco				
PRR 100	8:40am	12:40pm	Daily	
San Jose				
PRR 100	4:00pm	4:00pm	Daily	
San Francisco				
PRR 100	4:00pm	9:00pm	Daily	
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PRR 100	11			

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	46F (8C)
 Beijing	Sunny	91F (33C)	64F (18C)
 Hong Kong	Thunder	90F (32C)	79F (26C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87F (31C)	72F (22C)
 London, England	Showers	66F (19C)	51F (11C)
 Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	80F (27C)	62F (17C)
 Manila	Thunder	93F (34C)	82F (28C)
 Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	58F (14C)	42F (6C)
 Miami	Sunny	91F (33C)	76F (24C)
 New York City	Rain	70F (21C)	60F (16C)
 Osaka	Sunny	70F (21C)	55F (13C)
 Paris	Showers	65F (18C)	49F (9C)
 Pusan	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Rome	Cloudy	68F (20C)	51F (11C)
 Salem, Oregon	Sunny	74F (23C)	50F (10C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	67F (19C)	53F (12C)
 Seoul	Sunny	81F (27C)	60F (16C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Rain	68F (20C)	60F (16C)
 Washington, DC	Thunder	84F (29C)	64F (18C)



SEX BOMB

Call sent out for artworks

The Community and Cultural Affairs' Office of the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture is seeking artworks from visual and contemporary artists to submit for the upcoming Island Artists and Christmas Crafts Exhibit scheduled to open on Nov. 12, 2004 at the CNMI Gallery for Arts and Culture, next to the Post Office in Capitol Hill.

The deadline for submission of artworks will be on Monday, Nov. 8, 2004.

The Arts Council is inviting

all visual and contemporary artists to register and participate in the annual exhibit specifically highlighting the many arts and crafts in the CNMI.

Interested artists should submit their works at the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Cultures Office, Capitol Hill, from 8am to 4:30pm. Registration forms are available and participation is free.

For more information, contact Sinfo Pinaula or Janelle DL Guerrero at 322-9982 or 322-9983.

Mayor's Office offers utility subsidy

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela announced last week the availability of funds under the Mayor's Utility Assistance Program to help qualified residents pay for one month of their overdue power bill.

This is a federally funded program available to residents of the Municipality of Saipan who are unable to bring their power account current with the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

Applications can be picked up at the Saipan Mayor's Office at Afetnas Square in San Antonio during regular working hours, Monday to Friday, from 7:30am to 11:30am and from 12:30pm to 4pm.

For more information call the Saipan Mayor's Office at 234-6208 or 234-6280 and ask for Florence Camacho-Stephens or Regina Torres.

Hawaii ranked worst on taxes in US

KAUAI, Hawaii (The Garden Island, PIR)—The Tax Foundation, the nonprofit group best known for inventing Tax Freedom Day, ranks Hawai'i as having the least hospitable business tax climate of the 50 U.S. states.

A foundation study, "State Business Tax Climate Index," ranks South Dakota as having the most business-friendly tax state code in the country.

The index measures five things: Individual income tax, corporate income tax, sales tax, unemployment insurance tax, state fiscal balance.

The study was sparked by the finding that 99 percent of relocated jobs move to other states, and not overseas.

"States do not enact tax changes in a vacuum," said Scott Hodge, president of the

Tax Foundation." Every tax change will affect a state's competitive position."

The goal of the study is to focus state lawmakers on good tax fundamentals in their states as opposed to short-term tax abatements and exemptions designed to temporarily lure high profile companies, baseball teams, and auto plants from other states, said the Tax Foundation, a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that has monitored fiscal policy at the federal, state and local levels since 1937.

The index generally rewards tax codes that are neutral, have low and flat rates, are simple and transparent, avoid double taxation, and have statutory or constitutional restraints that keep tax burdens low over time, the group said.

Governor OKs insurance coverage bill but vetoes driver education bill

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta signed into law a bill that aims to allow "direct action" against negligent insurance companies.

Babauta said that House Bill 14-191, which amends the direct action provision set forth in Commonwealth Insurance Act of 1983, accomplishes the need to address economic issues that are adversely affecting the ability of insurance companies to do business in the CNMI.

At the same time, he said the measure continues to protect the rights of individuals who have suffered bodily harm or have incurred damage to property as a result of the negligent acts of a person or business that is covered by a liability insurance policy.

The present provision, he said, allows an individual to initiate a lawsuit against an insurance company "rather than the alleged negligent individual or business covered by a liability insurance policy."

"The unintended result of this 'direct action provision' has been a disparity in the amount of damages awarded to individuals when an insurance company is a named defendant and the amount of damages awarded to individuals in cases in which

an insurance company is not a named defendant," he said.

He acknowledged that the situation has adversely affected the ability of insurance companies to do business in the CNMI and resulted in an increase in premiums for liability insurance policies.

Babauta, meanwhile, disapproved House Bill 14-28, which would have required a person applying for a driver's license to first complete and pass a driver education course. The bill, Mandatory Driver Education Act of 2004, essentially mandates that an individual enroll in and successfully complete more than 10 days at a certified Driver's Education Program prior to being able to obtain a driver's license.

The bill requires a public, private or parochial college, university, or high school, or business enterprise seeking to establish a certified driver's education program to submit an official application to the Department of Public Safety containing a detailed curriculum that includes 30 hours of classroom instruction time and six hours of laboratory instruction time.

"The implementation of such curriculum is not practical for either private individuals seeking to obtain a driver's license or business whose employees operate commercial vehicles as

part of the scope of their employment," Babauta said.

He said it would adversely affect the tourism industry and the Department of Public Health because they employ foreign nationals who would be prevented from operating vehicles without passing first the 10-day driver's education program.

The bill requires that individuals from "foreign jurisdictions" and all other persons applying for a driver's license for the first time to pass the mandatory education program.

Further, Babauta said that the liability insurance requirement mandated for private driver education program is only limited to \$10,000, which "is not sufficient to cover the potential liability that exists for such a

driver's education program."

Likewise, he said that public institutions such as the Public School System or Northern Marianas College are not required by the bill to obtain any liability insurance for the program, thus putting the burden on the CNMI government to assume potential liability.

The measure, he said, also requires that only a vehicle approved by the Department of Public Safety can be used to conduct the laboratory instruction portion.

Babauta said he supports "the intent of this measure, but the provisions set forth therein are too restrictive and impractical."

He said the existing provisions are sufficient to ensure the safety of the public.

Veterans Day proclamation signing set

Nov. 11, 2004, is Veterans Day—a time to honor those who served and are serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta will be signing the Veterans Week proclamation at the Governor's Conference Room on Nov. 8, 2004 at 11am.

"We will remember those who served our great nation so that we may enjoy the

fruits of freedom of a democratic society. We ask that all veterans, active and reserve military members, their families, family members of those departed veterans, the local Marine Scouts and the general public to come and join us for the signing of this proclamation," a statement from the Governor's Office said.

financial insurance

daiichi celebrate
+213

Courtroom dramas open new Friends of the Arts season



SHAN SEMAN

TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT

Ben Sablan assists an applicant during the final day of National Emergency Grant temporary employment application intake process Saturday afternoon.

Ever wonder what it must be like to serve on a jury? Or have you thought up creative ways to avoid jury service? You're not alone! However, the guilt or innocence of a person accused of a crime just may hang in the balance. The importance of the juror's role in the execution of justice is the focus of the two shows, Trifles and Twelve Angry Jurors, that open the Friends of the Arts' 2004-2005 season.

On Nov. 11, 12, 13, and 14, 2004, a double bill featuring these shows will be presented at the Supreme Court Room, CNMI Judiciary Complex in Susupe. In Trifles, a one-act play set early in the 20th century, a murder has been committed and the "long arm of the law" sets about trying to figure out who did the deed. The issues of domestic violence, women's marginal role in society, and

their exclusion from participation in the legal system are highlighted as all parties try to determine what, in truth, constituted the crime and thus what constitutes justice. Twelve Angry Jurors, the second feature, allows the audience to witness the jury deliberations as the guilt or innocence of a murder suspect is determined. Personal biases emerge. Sparks fly. Will justice be served? Based on the television drama Twelve Angry Men, the jury for this show has been updated to include both men and women.

These shows appeal to young and old alike. Students are especially encouraged to attend with their teachers or parents as they explore the ways in which justice is, or possible is not, served.

These performances will be held in the Supreme Court Room, CNMI Judicial Complex

in Susupe, the perfect setting for such deliberations. Deep appreciation is extended to Chief Justice Miguel S. Demapan of the Commonwealth Supreme Court, Director of Court Margarita M. Palacios, and the judges and staff for making this opportunity possible.

Performances on Thursday and Friday evenings, Nov. 11 and 12, will begin promptly at 7:30pm. Saturday and Sunday performances are 2pm matinees. Tickets are just \$7 for adults and \$3 for children and students. Friends of the Arts' member discounts apply.

For more information, check the Friends of the Arts website at www.saipan.com/edu/mhs; go to Community Service Links and click on Friends of the Arts. To reserve your tickets, contact Melody Actouka, president, at 234-5498 Ext. 1734 or 235-1320.

New Palau airline determined to survive

HAGATNA, Guam (PDN, PIR)—Despite financial challenges created by the rising cost of fuel, Palau Micronesia Air officials are determined to survive.

Chief executive officer Alan Seid said it's been a difficult first few months for the regional airline, but added that the work to fulfill a dream was expected and will continue.

"It's a testament of professionalism," Seid said.

The airline has been busy celebrating its inaugural flight between Palau and Guam, while planning flights to Asia, refocusing on profitable routes and comparison-shopping toward buying a second jet.

"We see PMA as a bridge of culture and friendship. In the olden days, we had the canoes; ... today we sail in our aircraft and I hope the people of Guam help to support and help sustain a long-term viability in Guam," Seid said during a press conference held after a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the airport.

The airline's top officials, Palau first lady Debbie Remengesau and Gov. Robert Ruecho of Yap state in the Federated States of Micronesia, flew in on PMA's official inaugural flight that came in yesterday.

"It was a bold move," Frank F. Blas, chairman of the Guam airport's board, said about

Seid's four years of work to build the airline.

The fledgling airline has one Boeing 737-300 aircraft with a capacity of 126 passengers. Aside from its Micronesian island destinations, the airline also offers flights to Manila.

The airline has signed an agreement with Auckland, New Zealand-based Airwork Flight Operations to fly and maintain its aircraft.

Earlier this month the airline had to cut its route to Darwin, Australia, which started in August.

The cut is just one of the things the airline needed to do to survive the rising cost of jet fuel, Seid said.

Guam airport joins tourism push

HAGATNA, Guam (PDN, PIR)—Developing flight connections from China, Singapore and other Asia-Pacific areas to Guam is on the island airport agency's plan to help the Guam Visitors Bureau draw more visitors.

Frank F. Blas, chairman of the board for the A.B. Won Pat International Airport Authority, and a former lieutenant governor, laid out the agency's tourism-boosting efforts.

"Driving tourism diversification by finding new routes," was the theme at a recent Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association's Hotelier and Restaurateur chapter meeting.

Members of GHRA and the airport agency are working together to find ways to boost tourism in Guam, said David Tydingco, the association's president.

The meeting focused on improving the economy by developing new tourism routes.

"I believe it is the next necessary step for the airport," Blas said. "We need to survive as a business."

Because tourism is a vital part of the island community, Blas

emphasized the importance of the role the airport plays in bringing visitors to Guam.

As the local economy continues to show signs of rebounding, Blas projected that the number of tourists will increase to levels last seen before the 9/11 attacks, but that the airport must remain aggressive in diversifying the island's tourism markets.

The agency's new route development plan will focus on target tourist markets in other Asia-Pacific regions, such as Singapore and mainland China.

"If we target just 5 percent of the tourist market in Singapore, then we will increase our tourism rate by 17 percent already," Blas said during his presentation.

The visitors bureau has projected 1.3 million visitor arrivals this fiscal year, mostly from Japan.

The airport's route development plan proposes rate adjustments for carriers so that they may expand their current number of flights to current destinations, as well as new areas, such as Singapore and mainland China.

However, Blas mentioned the

difficulty in opening route connection between those markets and Guam, and added that he hopes to work with other international governments.

The route development plan also includes encouraging new airlines to come to Guam, also as a way to encourage competitive pricing.

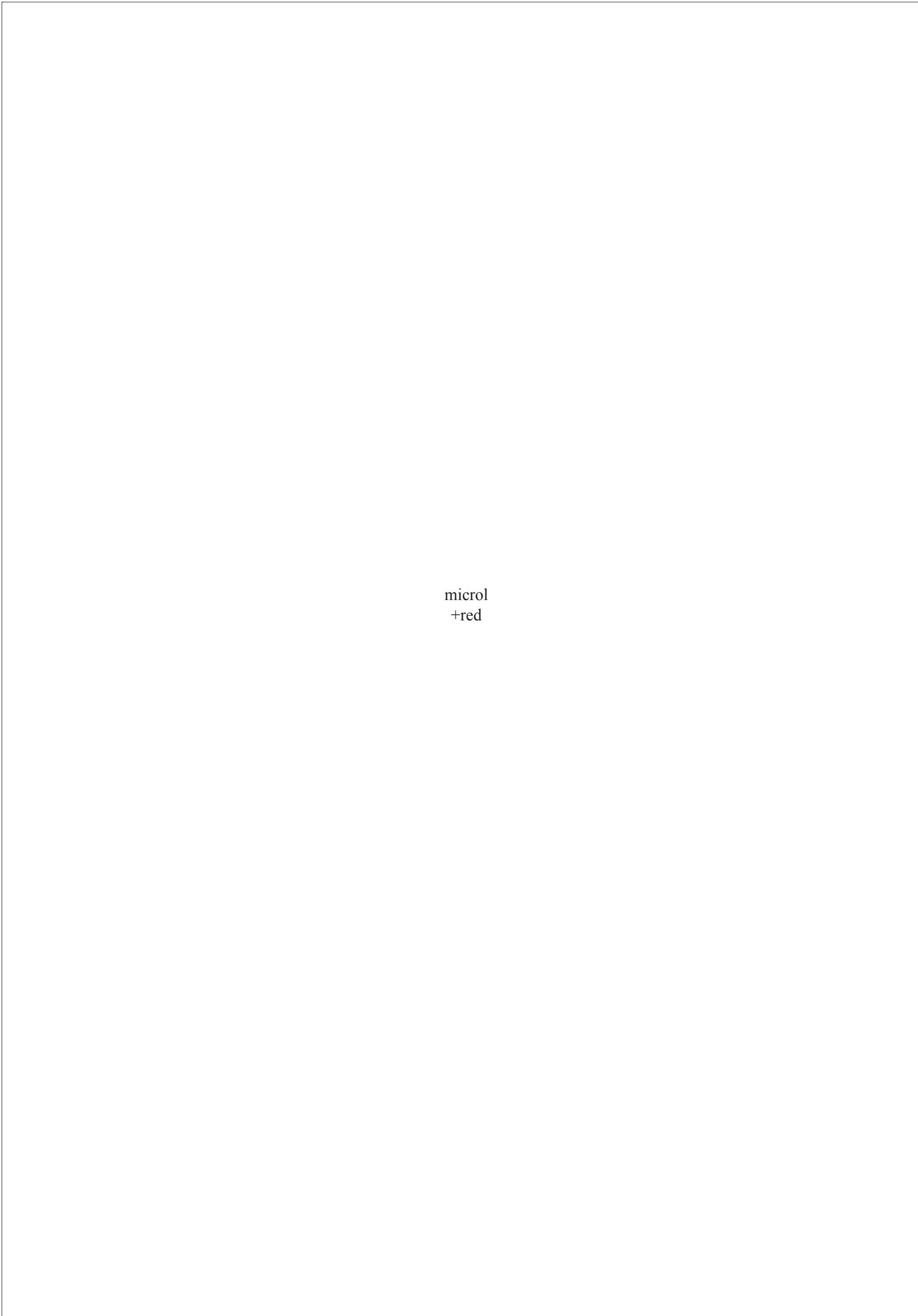
"We need to be aggressive and pour our resources into this and do a good job of marketing ourselves," Blas said.

Yutaka Maruyama, general manager of Leo Palace Resort Guam and a GHRA board member, said success in the tourism business relies heavily on the airport and that a GHRA partnership with the airport agency is crucial.

Maruyama also said the airport plays an important role beyond just bringing tourists to Guam. Bringing foreign companies and businesses to the island is an airport role as well, Maruyama said.

"Companies in the Asia-Pacific region see Guam as an ideal place to come for business meetings and functions," Maruyamasaid.

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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Sneezing, aching and anger

Even the most ardent libertarian is hard-pressed to argue against government protection from serious public health dangers. Tuberculosis. Typhoid fever. Polio. Influenza. All communicable, predictable and, in varying degrees, deadly. It's not just sympathy for the suffering victims that drives the idea. Even a week off work by one of every dozen employees carries a shattering total cost to the national economy.

So why was the health bureaucracy of the richest nation in the world caught off guard this week by the loss of half the 100 million flu vaccine doses it had been expecting this season? The shutdown of a key vaccine factory in Liverpool, England, because of bacterial contamination seemed to catch the U.S. government, to say nothing of thousands of hospitals, completely by surprise.

British regulators detected manufacturing errors that inspectors from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration missed. Though it's possible that the full story won't be known for months, it's already abundantly clear that when vaccine maker Chiron Corp. first revealed serious contamination problems at its factory in August, British health officials quickly found other suppliers. Their citizens are not facing a vaccine shortage. U.S. doctors and hospitals will have to turn away millions of supplicants and are likely to see many of them back in costly emergency rooms in coming months with highly infectious flu.

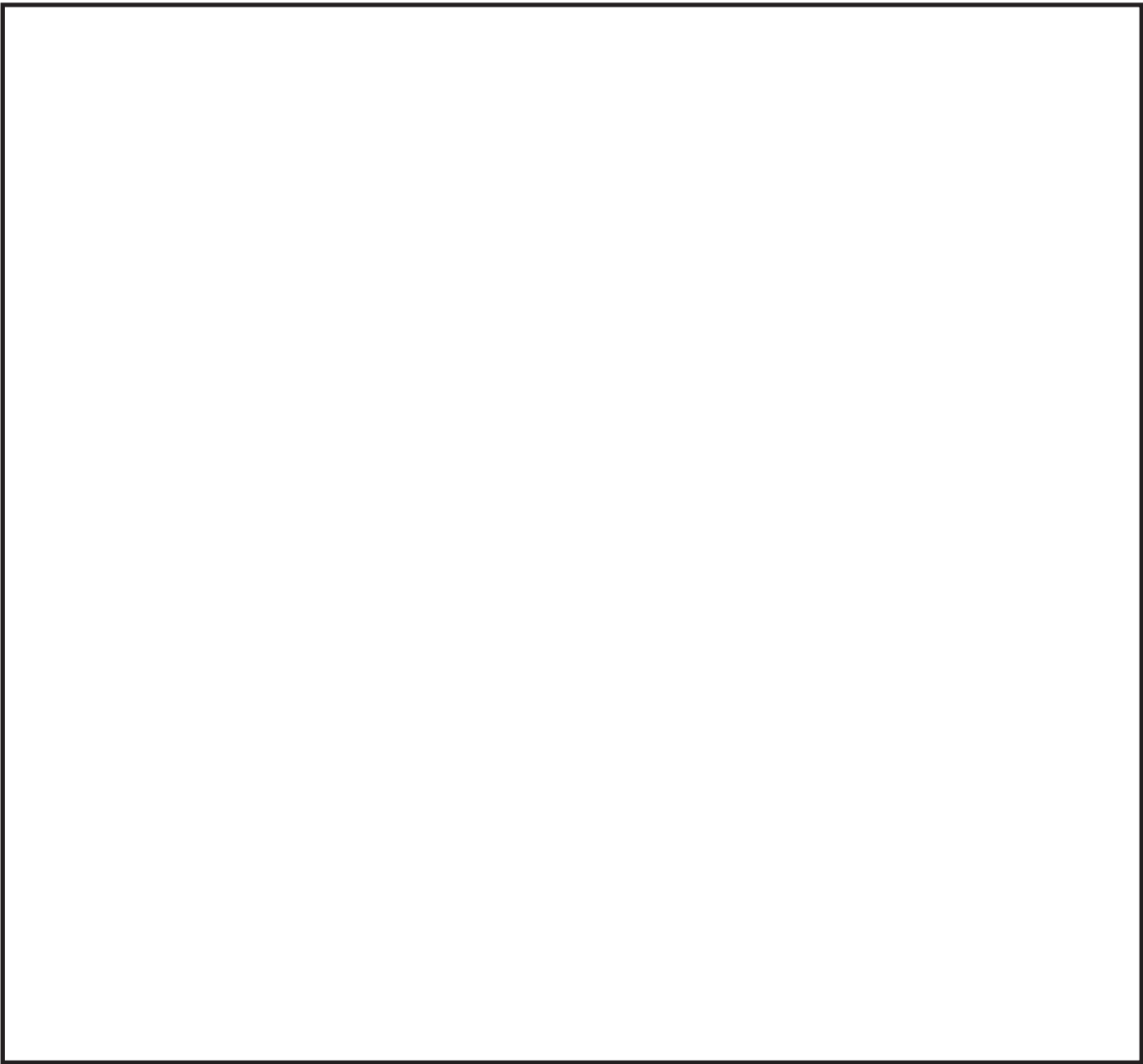
Because it takes up to six months to produce more vaccine, there is no way to fill the chasm created by the three-month closure of the Chiron factory. All that's left is triage, seeking ways to shift the supplies left to the elderly, ill and very young. A congressional hearing Friday failed to identify any efficient way to do so.

In the longer run, Congress can at least set aside more money for researching new vaccine production techniques, which have changed little since British physician Edward Jenner began antiviral vaccinations by inoculating his patients against smallpox in the 18th century. Congress has funded only half of the \$100million the Bush administration requested earlier this year to research the most promising new technique—making the vaccine not from chicken eggs, which take months to hatch, but from readily available animal cells. The need for haste should now be obvious to legislators.

Congress also ought to be asking why the U.S. is dependent on just two manufacturers, with much of the supply coming from abroad. What's missing in the regulatory arena?

Flu vaccines are an unalloyed social good. Public health officials consumed with stockpiling smallpox vaccine and sarin antidotes against a terror attack now face a human and economic cost that would make a terrorist shiver with glee. The boring business of flu vaccine is suddenly a crisis, and government has to own up to its responsibility.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



Eight simple questions from a veteran

By KEITH W. MINES
SPECIAL TO THE BALTIMORE SUN

I am a 28-year veteran of the active Army and Reserves, having served the nation in civilian and military assignments in Grenada, Honduras, El Salvador, Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq.

I am the son of an artillery forward observer who fought in the Pacific in World War II, the father of a young man who will reach military age during the next administration and is anxious to get into uniform, the uncle of a Marine who was on his way to the Ramadi-Fallujah area of Iraq (his second deployment), and the second cousin of a young soldier who recently returned from a year in Sadr City.

I am from the class of Americans that fights our wars, as opposed to the class that theorizes and fantasizes about them. As I vote Nov. 2, I will not take with me the impressions garnered from the candidates' use of the armed forces as campaign props in the conventions and debates. Rather, I will ask the following questions about how the next president will organize our military for war and how he will position our country in the world:

Will you increase the size of the military? I have yet to meet anyone in uniform at any rank who believes that the current force is large enough to manage the totality of America's threats. In the wake of 9/11, we are involved in a manpower-intensive fight with huge unknowns. We need a big increase in our armed forces to manage the threats, several new permanent divisions for the Army and Marines and large increases in our special operations forces and reserve force, at a minimum.

Will you maintain the post-Vietnam force structure? After Vietnam, our military was restructured so that it would be impossible to go to war without a national consensus by making Reserve and National Guard units essential to any large campaign. This made deployments slightly slower but enhanced long-term national support for our operations. I would be extremely leery of moves to return the military to a federal force that could be deployed without this consensus.

Will you build lasting alliances? Forget the go-it-alone machis-

mo. It might bring the crowds to their feet on the campaign trail, but for the soldiers and Marines who are now deploying for the second time in Iraq, more allies would be welcome.

Will you carry out policies that will anger the world? There is an endless supply of recruits for al-Qaida and other terrorist spin-offs, part of the huge middle ground that is waiting to be persuaded to fight against us or to leave us alone. How we conduct ourselves in the world will help determine which way the middle moves. I want a president who inspires respect and is viewed positively, not one who enrages and infuriates.

Will you forcibly repudiate Abu Ghraib? The Abu Ghraib prison scandal may be the biggest foreign policy disaster since Vietnam. By leaving in its wake images of American sexual and physical domination of Arab men, it will inspire our enemies and enhance recruiting for groups that wish to hurt us at a time when the ability to damage us has increased manyfold. I seek a president who will forcibly repudiate these actions and contain their long-term damage.

Will you listen to your military advisers? It is understood by civilian leaders of the armed forces that their job is to set policy and allow the military to carry it out. When the civilian leadership gets too deeply involved in the nuts and bolts of military operations, things tend to go awry.

Do you have a strategy? Since 9/11, we have devised a number of tools for fighting terrorism but have yet to develop a toolbox. Neither candidate has laid out a comprehensive strategy for our current conflict or a paradigm for the post-Cold War world. I would be interested in a doctrine, however flexible and broad, that could replace containment and guide our policies and practices, giving us something more creative than simply "staying the course."

Do you understand the world? While it is not the nature of our political system to offer leaders who are well traveled and have lived abroad, some understanding of the world would be helpful for a wartime leader.

Bush and Kerry may continue to waste money on petty attack ads and counterattack ads if they like, but to win this veteran's vote, they would do better to answer these eight simple questions.

Mines is a major in the Army Special Forces Reserve.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

In the land where Soviet style lives on

By **PETER SAVODNIK**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

Vladimir Putin's recent call for a new Russian authoritarianism—and the near-total support the president's proposal enjoys at home—should rattle not only Western diplomats but democratic opposition leaders throughout the former Soviet Union. For them, Russia's reversal raises a fundamental, even existential, question: Are the people living in the 15 former Soviet republics capable of governing themselves? Do they yearn to be free? Or is it their nature to acquiesce to dictatorship when the apparent price of freedom—say, the massacre of hundreds of schoolchildren—becomes too expensive?

This question of post-Soviet political identity is particularly salient in Belarus, Russia's immediate neighbor to the west: On Oct. 17, Belarusians, having rejected freedom in favor of security a decade ago, head to the polls for parliamentary elections. Their dictatorial president, Alexander Lukashenko, has shown little appetite for democratic reform. But the liberal activists running for office—a hodgepodge of social democrats, free marketeers, reconstructed Marxists and others who call themselves the Five-Plus Coalition—believe now is their moment.

This is, at least for the present, a dubious proposition. In Belarus, the fourth estate is more or less an organ of Lukashenko's regime, and elections are for show; fears of ballot tampering and last-minute disqualification of democratic candidates are rampant. Before liberal reform can sweep Belarus or Russia, Ukraine, Moldova or Georgia, the people of those nations will have to choose whether they want to be subjects or citizens, whether they want the right (and the responsibility) to build their own future. This may sound odd to Americans, since most of us take it for granted that all peoples want to be the masters of their own destinies. But at a time when the United States is exporting, or attempting to export, democracy to the Middle East, it's legitimate to ask whether, in fact, everyone everywhere wants to be like us. Our experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the uncertainty surrounding the post-Soviet world, should give us pause.

Stanislav Shushkevich, the former head of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus and current leader of the Social Democratic Party, voices skepticism about the democratic movement's chances of making any headway this year, even as he remains committed to the idea of democracy. He points out that Belarusians have been condi-

tioned by centuries of oppression to put up with almost anything; a quarter of the pre-war Belarusian population was murdered by the Soviets and the Nazis in the 1930s and '40s. To many, Lukashenko is but a pale shadow of Stalin and Brezhnev, an utterly unexceptional postscript to socialist totalitarianism. Indeed, Lukashenko retains support among peasants living in pre-Soviet villages, and the pensioners and World War II veterans whose lives were defined by the struggle against fascism, five-year plans and the socialist march toward "freedom."

When I visited him in the capital city of Minsk last May, Shushkevich, who is nearing 70, speculated that the moment for peaceful transition may have been lost. A former nuclear physicist, it was he, along with Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk, then president of Ukraine, who formally dissolved the Soviet Union in a Belarusian hunting lodge in late 1991.

Ten million Belarusians who had been rotting away in a "workers' paradise" haunted by the gulag and made nearly uninhabitable by the Chernobyl disaster were set free. A liberal regime took power, with Shushkevich at its head. But the West, Shushkevich told me, missed its best opportunity to help build a stable democracy when it failed to give Belarus low-interest loans. The "shock therapy" of privatization proved too great for Belarusians, he said. Lukashenko, a parliamentary deputy at the time, was able to capitalize on widespread discontent.

After three years of independence, the Belarusians decided they'd had enough of democracy. With the 1994 election of Lukashenko, they made clear what they wanted: Order, predictability and an all-powerful state to safeguard against drug traffickers, arms dealers and foreign investors looking to carve up downtown Minsk. They also made it clear what they did not want: Freedom. The freedom to build a life, to express an opinion, to be more than a cog in the communal organism.

Today, Lukashenko is the unquestioned dictator of his country, having spent the past decade marginalizing opposition leaders, shutting down independent newspapers and squeezing business owners to the point of near-extinction.

Shushkevich doesn't foresee a peaceful evolution to a more democratic society. He believes that a challenge to Lukashenko is more likely to resemble what took place in Romania, where dictator Nicolae Ceaucescu was murdered in 1989, than in Czechoslovakia, where a bloodless Velvet Revolution toppled the communist regime that same year. "My parents and grandparents would put it this way," he said of Lukashenko's long-

term prospects. "This man will not die a natural death."

This is indeed a critical time, and not only in Belarus. Ukrainians will vote for their next president on Oct. 31, and the recent suspected poisoning of opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko is just one of many signs that reform will not come easily to the former Soviet Union.

In the longer term, though, there are reasons to be hopeful. First, Belarus is not a place like Iraq, with its ancient hatreds, war-torn cities and radical theocrats hellbent on annihilating all things Western. It is a European nation with churches, newspapers and an intelligentsia that has given rise to a protest class of students, trade unionists, veterans of the Afghan war, even ex-KGB agents.

More importantly, it is not defined so much by language, ethnicity or race as by geography. "I think ethnic origins don't mean anything," said poet Nikolai Viniatski, while taking part in a protest against the regime in Minsk last spring. Belarus is populated by Orthodox Russians, Polish Catholics, even a smattering of Jews. Inter-marriage is easy and ubiquitous. It was the Soviets who concocted this mix, as part of their plan to "de-ethnicize" the proletarian mass. And now, ironically, it is that cultural re-engineering of a half-century ago that is laying the foundation for post-Soviet democracy, activists believe. In Belarus, Viniatski explained, there is no tribalism; the ethnic tension that colors life in the Baltics, the conflagration that is the Caucasus, could never happen here. People are, for the most part, comfortable with difference. You might call them post-ethnic.

You might also call them post-ideological. In Belarus, they know that Marx's scientific materialism is dead. That dream turned out to be a joke for which tens of millions died. This has made Belarusians bitter and ironic. Over vodka, in their kitchens, they call their fearless leader a buffoon who likes to work out with the national hockey team but has been barred from the White House. They wonder when they will be able to join the community of nations.

All this can be to the good, even if the elections later this month are unlikely to spark a revolution. In Belarus's East European neighbors and elsewhere, after all, bitterness and irony have often served as a ripe medium for change.

The author is political editor of the Hill newspaper in Washington. He traveled to Belarus on a fellowship from the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The CNMI gubernatorial leadership: 1978-2004

First of five parts

The CNMI became a bona fide Commonwealth in 1978. Over the past 26 years, the registered electorate in the CNMI has elected six governors to provide leadership, direction, and vision for the island community. Of the six governors, two were affiliated with the Democrat Party and three with the Grand Old Party (GOP). One of the governors, Pedro P. Tenorio, a Republican, served three terms covering a span of 12 years. The names of the governors and their terms in office are: Carlos S. Camacho (Democrat) 1978 to 1982; Pedro P. Tenorio (Republican) 1982 to 1990; Lorenzo I. De Leon Guerrero (Republican) 1990 to 1994; Froilan C. Tenorio (Democrat) 1994 to 1998; Pedro P. Tenorio (Republican) 1998 to 2002; and Juan N. Babauta (Republican) 2002 to present.

During the administrations of each of the above-referenced governors, there were fiscal decisions made by each governor based on advice conveyed to them by their closest advisers that either helped or hindered the financial health of the CNMI. The economic reports that have been generated by the CNMI Department of Finance and Bank of Hawaii since the inception of the Commonwealth have meticulously delineated the financial particulars of what transpired fiscally during the terms of all of the CNMI governors.

Because the "truth" should always be in the forefront for the electorate, it is vitally important that the entire island community be made aware of the "true facts" involving all of the leaders who

have been elected as governor for the CNMI. Understanding these facts will enable everyone to utilize a "fact check" and discern whether anything that any former or current governor says reflects the "truth" or something other than the truth.

The following cliché is something that I consider relative and perhaps it might keep everything in the proper perspective; and it goes like this: Figures don't lie, but liars figure. Figures are substantive unless they have been manipulated, and rhetoric is empty unless it reflects the truth.

From 1978 through 1988

The Northern Mariana Islands Economic Report generated by the Bank of Hawaii in 1995 stated that "during the first decade of the Commonwealth from 1978 through 1988, the CNMI maintained "balanced budgets." With respect to giving credit for maintaining fiscal responsibility for the Commonwealth, Carlos S. Camacho and Pedro P. Tenorio were the governors who clearly kept the fiscal reigns of the CNMI government under very good control and did not allow the island community to experience the hardship of operating under a deficit and having to deal with fiscal constraints. Unfortunately, this financial stability that was established by these two fiscally-minded governors during the late 1970's and 1980's is a thing of the past and a far cry from what currently exists today.

The Bank of Hawaii economic report of 1995 also revealed that

"in the 1988-1991 economic booms, the CNMI produced a surplus of revenues in each of the four fiscal years. The total amount of revenues collected versus what was expended during the above-mentioned four-year timeframe were included in the BOH economic report of 1999; they are as follows and depict "millions of dollars": 1988 (Revenues—87,301; Expenditures—42,049); 1989 (Revenues—95,750; Expenditures—81,217); 1990 (Revenues—116,749; Expenditures—108,632); 1991 (Revenues—151,019; Expenditures—156,319). The net result of all four fiscal years was a surplus of nearly \$70 million.

Hence, Pedro P. Tenorio was able to move the government into a surplus mode for the last two years of his second term from 1988 to 1990 and maintained the fiscal stability for the CNMI that Carlos S. Camacho established as the first governor.

In summary, the CNMI enjoyed "balanced budgets" and the generation of surplus revenues during the governorships of Carlos S. Camacho and Pedro P. Tenorio's. Because they exercised control in keeping the government fiscally stable, both Carlos S. Camacho and Pedro P. Tenorio should be recognized as two of the most fiscally responsible governors in the history of the CNMI.

To be continued.

Dr. Jesus D. Camacho
Delano, California

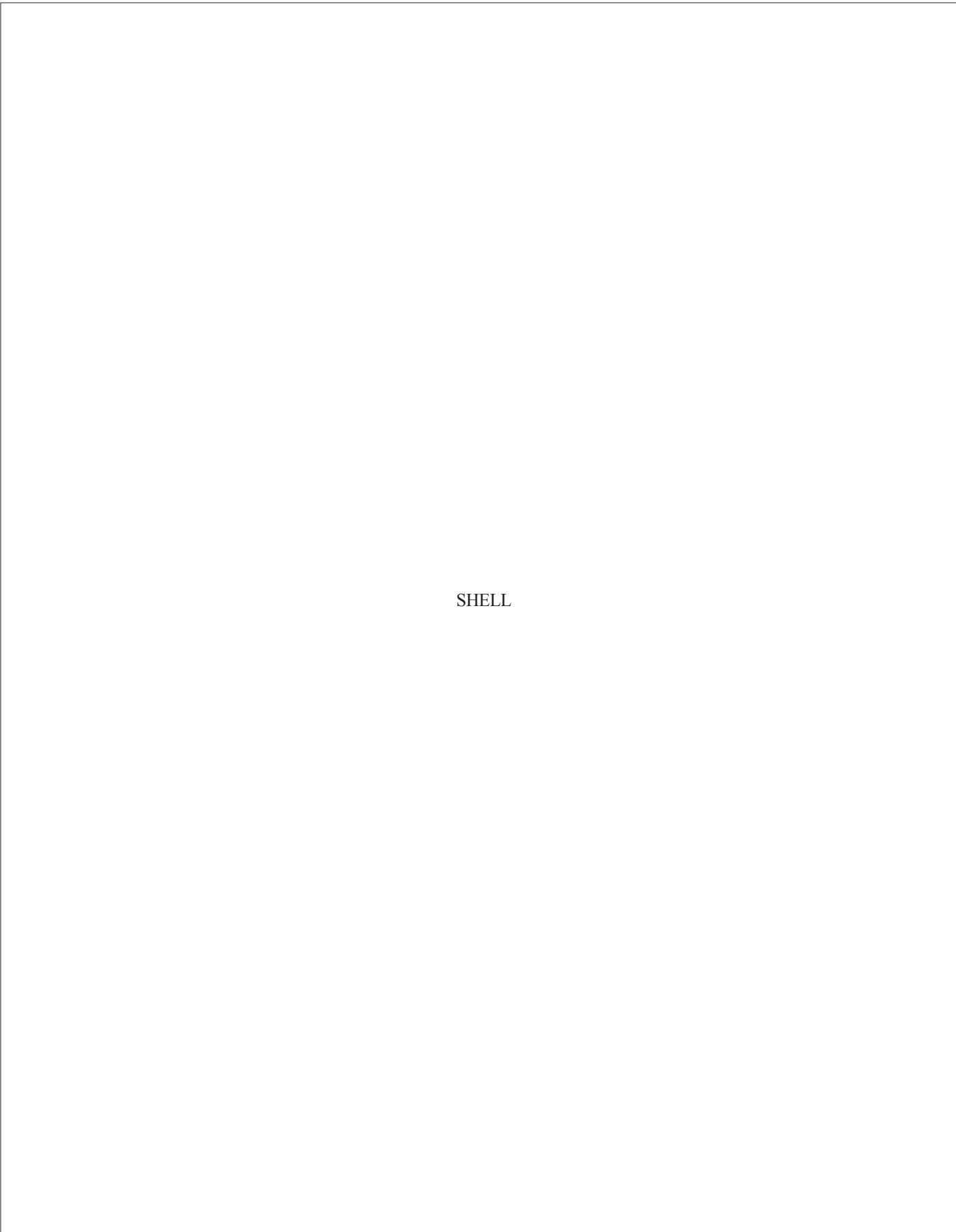
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Island Snapshots

Nation





World



Campus Life

Scholarship programs now accepting applicants

FOOD SALE

Junior students of the Marianas High School sell food during a pre-Halloween activity held at the school.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Marianas High School's open house today

To all parents and legal guardians of Marianas High School students, the Marianas High School will be hosting an Open House today, Nov. 3, 2004 from 4pm to 7pm. During the open house, report cards will be distributed for 1st quarter grades. We invite all parents/legal guardians to visit your student's classrooms, meet the teachers, and pick up your student's report card.

OES PTSA meeting set

The PTSA officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School that the PTSA meeting will be on Tuesday, Nov. 9, 6pm, in the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Learn to scuba dive for free

The Youth Alliance Dive Program announced that it is currently accepting applications for its Fall Open Water Dive Program.

The program is available for local residents between 15 and 24 years of age at no cost but only 12 slots are available and will be filled on first-come-first-serve basis.

Dive instructor Joe Paran said half of the slots are already filled, and registration will

cease as soon as all slots are occupied.

Paran said participants in the program will learn to scuba dive, and those enrolled in college may get credit for their participation. Further, he said participants could earn certification for open water diving through the program.

The program started in March this year. Paran said the program would be available during each college semester of every school year. For more information, contact Paran at 287-4196.

ChaCha cancels PTSA meeting

The ChaCha Jr. High School has cancelled its monthly PTSA meeting that was supposed to be held today, Nov. 3, until further notice.

Should you have any questions, call the school at 664-4100, 4103, 4105 and/or 4106.

MHS MY WAVEs solicit help from alumni

The Marianas High School's MY WAVE club is soliciting help from all MHA alumni.

"We are requesting your help in donating novels, fiction books and magazines," the group said in a statement.

Those who would like to make a donation or want more information may contact club adviser Tim Faska at 287-7550 or mhsmywave_2005@hotmail.com

Deadline set for EAP scholarship application

The Educational Assistance Program Winter/Spring 2005 deadline is Dec. 15, 2004.

EAP is for those who have completed their high school requirement and desires to pursue a postsecondary education (certificate to bachelor's degree).

EAP provides funding to assist defray educational cost for eligible individuals for the following program:

- on-island/offisland enrolled at an accredited institution as a fulltime status;

- on-island fulltime employee who desires to pursue a postsecondary education on a part-time status;

- on-island students taking courses online which are not offered at Northern Marianas College.

Upon availability of funds, EAP offers financial assistance for the following programs:

Graduate, Juris Doctor or Doctor of Medicine.

Application must be received in our office or postmarked no later than Dec. 15, 2004. If you have submitted an application for Fall 2004, the application is still valid. Supporting documents (may be submitted at a later date) are U.S. passport and/or birth certificate issued by the court, an acceptance letter into the school you plan to attend, the most recent official sealed transcript and proof of 2002 & 2003 CNMI residency.

Additionally, other scholarship application for the 2004/2005 is now available. Log on to www.cnmischolarship.com for more details.

SHEFA accepting new applicants

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela and the board of directors of the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance are pleased to announce that SHEFA is now accepting new

applications for financial assistance for Spring 2005.

The deadline for submission of applications and supporting documents is Dec. 1, 2004. Applications and supporting documents submitted after the deadline will not be entertained or considered for the Spring 2005 cycle of financial assistance.

All bona fide residents of Saipan who are U.S. citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents attending U.S. accredited colleges or universities on Saipan or abroad who are enrolled on full-time status with at least 2.5 GPA must submit their completed applications and all supporting documents to the SHEFA Office anytime on or before Dec. 1, 2004. For more detailed information on the requirements for SHEFA assistance, log on to www.saipanshefa.com, or contact that SHEFA Office at e-mail address contact@saipanshefa.com; or directly at (670) 664-2585 and ask for Sue Dris or Florence Stephen at the Saipan Mayor's Office at (670) 235-7444.

UOG to host job fair Nov. 5

About 20 companies and organizations will be advertising their vacancies on Nov. 5 at the University of Guam's semi-annual Career and Job Fair.

The event is co-sponsored by the Agency for Human Resource Development and will feature a diverse set of employers and recruiters from Hawaii, Saipan, Tinian, and Washington D.C.

The job fair is held once every semester at the UOG field house where students, alumni, and the public are invited to attend.

Leah Beth Naholowaa, the career development officer at UOG,

said she feels that the economy is doing much better because many companies are hiring.

"This is an indication that we're improving, companies are hiring," Naholowaa said.

Naholowaa also said that this year, the number of participating employers has exceeded the 10 to 15 that have been featured in the past.

"There's a lot of job openings available. I hope people take advantage of this," she said.

Participants are encouraged to dress appropriately and bring their resumes, as many may be interviewed on the spot.

Those attending the job fair will be able to see what the local and federal governments have to offer as well as the local private sector.

Hawaii Pacific University will also be featuring their career opportunities as well as their online programs. Military recruiters from as far away as Washington, D.C. also will be present.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School system, as well as Tinian High School, will also be recruiting teachers from Guam. **(PDN/PIR)**

MELL
+RED/BLUE

Life & Style

China overhauling Forbidden City palace

By JOE McDONALD
AP WRITER

It's the ultimate in home repair: hundreds of rooms, a century of fire damage and neglect—and steadily mounting wear and tear from 7 million visitors a year. China is at work on the first full-scale effort to restore the imperial grandeur of its 584-year-old Forbidden City, the world's biggest palace and former residence of 24 emperors.

Rebuilding and painting the vermilion-walled palace is expected to take until 2020. The ambitious project includes tearing down a five-story museum and other modern buildings that disrupt the original layout of the grounds.

"Our repair work will achieve the goal of reclaiming the grandeur and the real landscape of the palace at the height of imperial society," the palace's deputy curator, Jin Honghui, said Thursday.

Carpenters and bricklayers are at work on scaffolding that shrouds giant gateways and halls where Ming and Qing dynasty rulers lived, played and governed an empire that stretched from the Pacific Ocean to Central Asia and from the tropics to Siberia.

The renovation, begun in 2001, reflects the communist government's new enthusiasm for resurrecting symbols of China's historic greatness as a way to bind together a nation that has abandoned leftist ideals amid break-neck economic reform.

Elsewhere in China, authorities are spending lavishly to rebuild temples, gardens and other imperial-era sites, often helped by the United Nations and foreign donors.

The government is spending \$12



Workers repair the roof of a hall at the Forbidden City in Beijing Wednesday Oct. 27, 2004.

million a year to restore the Forbidden City, Jin said—a big sum in a society where the average annual income per person is less than \$1,000.

Completed in 1420, the palace is a sprawling complex of scores of villas, chapels, treasure houses and gardens that covers 178 acres in Beijing. It is ringed by a 35-foot-high wall and a 170-foot-wide moat.

The scale of the place is equally vast. The cavernous throne room could double

as an aircraft hangar. Jin said that after working there for two years, he isn't sure how many rooms the palace has.

After the 1949 revolution, a single garden outside the west wall was turned into a housing compound where President Hu Jintao and other Chinese leaders live and work today in spacious comfort.

A portrait of communist founder Mao Zedong hangs from the palace's main Gate of Heavenly Peace, or

Tiananmen. The gate serves as the reviewing stand for Communist Party leaders during military parades and gave its name to the Chinese capital's main square, the symbolic political heart of the nation.

The last imperial resident was Puyi, the boy ruler depicted in Bernardo Bertolucci's 1987 film "The Last Emperor." Puyi's dynasty was overthrown by Sun Yat-sen's revolutionaries in 1911, but he was allowed to stay on

until 1924. He was finally evicted by a reform-minded warlord who turned the complex into a museum.

The palace is so dilapidated after a century of political upheaval and neglect that much of it is closed to the public.

But still, the Forbidden City is China's biggest tourist attraction, drawing some 7 million visitors a year. Bronze sculptures on display—copies of ancient pieces—have been rubbed shiny by tourists. Millions of feet have eroded its stone courtyards.

The renovation already has consumed 330,000 bricks, and 590,000 tiles for the palace's distinctive mustard-yellow rooftops.

Officials plan to remove several modern structures, including the National Archives Museum, which "has nothing to do with the palace," Jin said. They also plan to conceal power lines and water pipes that jut out of many of the buildings.

The work requires modern builders to match the efforts of centuries of China's best carpenters, gardeners, painters and furniture makers, often with only sketchy records to guide them.

Among their projects: Starting from scratch to rebuild the Jianfugong Garden, destroyed by fire in 1923.

To figure out what the garden should look like, Jin said, researchers rummaged through official archives and pored over documents totaling some 80 million Chinese characters.

"Our aim is to ensure the integrity and historical truth of the Forbidden City," Jin told reporters in a parlor at the palace. "It's very important to keep the original look of the palace. That is the first principle of our work."

Cartier shows jewels at Houston Museum

HOUSTON (AP)—Those who can't afford Cartier's jewels can admire them up close at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, where diamond and aquamarine tiaras, a 150-carat sapphire brooch once owned by the Dutchess of Windsor and other jewels are on display.

The exhibit, which has only one U.S. stop in Houston, is unique because it focuses on the quality of the jewelry's design and beauty, rather than who owned the jewels or the time period in which they were created, museum officials said.

The exhibit opens Sunday and continues through March 27.

"People will be knocked out, maybe a little frightened by the brilliance of it," said Peter Marzio, the museum's director, who brought the exhibit to Houston after seeing it in Milan and Berlin.

Italian architect Ettore Sottsass put together the exhibit of 209 pieces from the renowned jeweler's 1,200-piece private collection.

"The basic idea was to select the items of jewelry solely on the basis

of their design," Sottsass said. "We made our choices on the basis of that we considered to be the prettiest, the most wearable, the most reasonable."

The jewels, including gem-studded cigarette holders, binoculars, handbags, powder boxes, timepieces and more traditional necklaces, bracelets and rings, shimmer in a darkened exhibit hall.

Two of the more stunning pieces appear at the beginning of the exhibit—a platinum tiara from 1908 with 15 pear-shaped diamonds and oriental pearls and a platinum-and-round-diamond choker necklace created by Cartier in 1906.

The exhibit's final piece is a crocodile necklace created in 1975 for Mexican actress Maria Felix. The two crocodile bodies are gold. One is covered with 1,023 yellow diamonds, while the other is adorned with 1,060 circular cut emeralds.

According to legend, Felix showed up to an appointment with Cartier walking a crocodile and asked that they make her a necklace.

Jelinek receives Czech Literary Award

PRAGUE, Czech Republic (AP)—Elfriede Jelinek, the Austrian novelist, playwright and poet who won this year's Nobel prize for literature, has been awarded a prestigious Czech literary prize.

Jelinek, absent from the ceremony at Prague's City Hall on Monday, was awarded the annual Franz Kafka Prize for her literary work. She was chosen in May from 23 names by an international jury that includes prominent German literary critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki and British publisher John Calder.

Jelinek also has no plans to travel to Stockholm, Sweden, for the Dec. 10 Nobel prize ceremony. She leads a somewhat withdrawn lifestyle and once told The Associated Press that she suffers from a social phobia.

"For the first time, the prize is being awarded to a woman, an outstanding personality of Austrian literature and theater who became known for her criticism of all expressions of xenophobia," said Prague's



Austrian Nobel prize winner in literature, novelist, poet and playwright Elfriede Jelinek is seen in her home in Vienna during an interview with The Associated Press on Oct. 7, 2004.

Mayor Pavel Bem, who presented the award.

Austria's ambassador to the Czech Republic, Klas Daubelsky, accepted the Kafka award for Jelinek—a small statue of Kafka by the Czech artist Jaroslav Rona.

"From the very beginning of our discussions, Elfriede Jelinek was at the first place among all of them," said Jiri Stransky, Czech author, head of the Czech branch of the PEN Club and a member of the jury.

Jelinek's most famous work is 1983's "The Piano Teacher," which was adapted into a 2001 film by director Michael Haneke. Her most recent work, the 2003 play "Bambiland," attacked the U.S. invasion of Iraq. A sequel, titled "Babel," is set to appear in May as her first post-Nobel work.

Jelinek is the fourth recipient of the award, which was established in 2001; celebrated author Philip Roth is a past honoree. The Kafka award includes a cash prize of \$10,000.

Wuorinen's 'Haroun' has world premiere

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Few children would have the patience to listen to Charles Wuorinen's "Haroun and the Sea Stories," an opera based on a children's book by Salman Rushdie.

The complex two-act work, filled with wit and whimsy, is driven by James Fenton's brilliant libretto. Wuorinen's complex 12-tone, counterpoint-filled music is a backdrop to the words much of the time—an odd pairing with such a fantasy.

In the first few minutes of the world premiere Sunday at the New York City Opera, there were references to Boccaccio, Proust, Tolstoy and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Actions that befuddle were called "P2C2E"—a Process Too Complicated to Explain." When the chorus at one point sang out: "This is minimalism," the audience broke into a laugh.

Rushdie's story was published in 1990, a year after Ayatollah Khomeini called for his death in retribution for his novel "The Satanic Verses." It centers on Rashid, a storyteller, and his son Haroun. Rashid, the self-

described "Ocean of Notions," "Shah of Blah" and "guru of the Gulf of Gumption," loses his ability to tell stories when his wife leaves.

Haroun wants to help his father regain his power, and they journey to such spots as the Valley of K, the Sea of Stories, the Moon of Kafani, the Land of Gup and the Land of Chup. They meet characters named Butt, Snooty Buttoo, Iff the water genie and Khattam-Shud, the prince of silence.

There are clever rhymes, like much of Sondheim. When they are on a bus heading to the Valley of K, the chorus points out: "All the dangerous overtakers end up at undertakers" and "Look out. Slow down. Don't be funny. Life is precious. Cars cost money."

The work is filled with metaphors against authoritarian regimes and pollution. There is a war chorus that evokes both "Aida" and "Duck Soup." In the end, Khattam-Shud is overthrown, Rashid's wife returns, the family is reunited and Rashid's storytelling power returns.

Mark Lamos' minimalist production allowed Candice



Heather Buck, left, is Haroun and Ryan MacPherson plays Iff, the water genie, during the New York City Opera's dress rehearsal of "Haroun and the Sea Stories," Wednesday Oct. 27, 2004, in New York.

Donnelly's colorful costumes and Peter Nigrini's projections to dominate. The sets by Riccardo Hernandez were mostly dark backdrops and chains of light bulbs.

Heather Buck was the star as Haroun, carrying the opera with both her soprano and boyish charm. This was a work that called equally for voice and acting, and the large ensemble, conducted by music director George Manahan, pulled it off. The group included bass-baritone Peter Strummer (Rashid), Ryan MacPherson (Iff), James Schaffner (Khattam-Shud), Ethan Hershenfeld (Butt), Joel Sorensen (Snooty Buttoo) and Mali (Wilbur Pauley). The two best costumes belonged to the plentimaw fish, Bagha (Andrew Drost) and Goopy (Robert Mack).

Wuorinen and Rushdie joined the cast for bows at the end. While "Haroun" was given a warm reception at the premiere, only the more musically inclined parents will drag the kiddies along to introduce them to a composition that can be difficult to synthesize. It will be interesting to follow how many companies take up this opera.

Mel Gibson weighs in on stem-cell issue

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A proposition to fund stem cell research turned into the battle of the Hollywood stars Thursday when actor Mel Gibson spoke out against the \$3 billion bond measure and offered his help to an opposition campaign.

Gibson appeared on ABC's "Good Morning America" and said he had an "ethical problem" with the proposition, which would make about \$300 million available annually for 10 years to fund the controversial research. The measure would allow cloning for medical research only.

Gibson has recorded a 60-second message that he gave to the campaign Thursday. A spokesman for the anti-proposition campaign said officials are still discussing how to use the message.

"It's kind of a last-minute thing but we are glad he could join," said No on 71 spokesman Tim Rosales. "He's a great spokesperson."

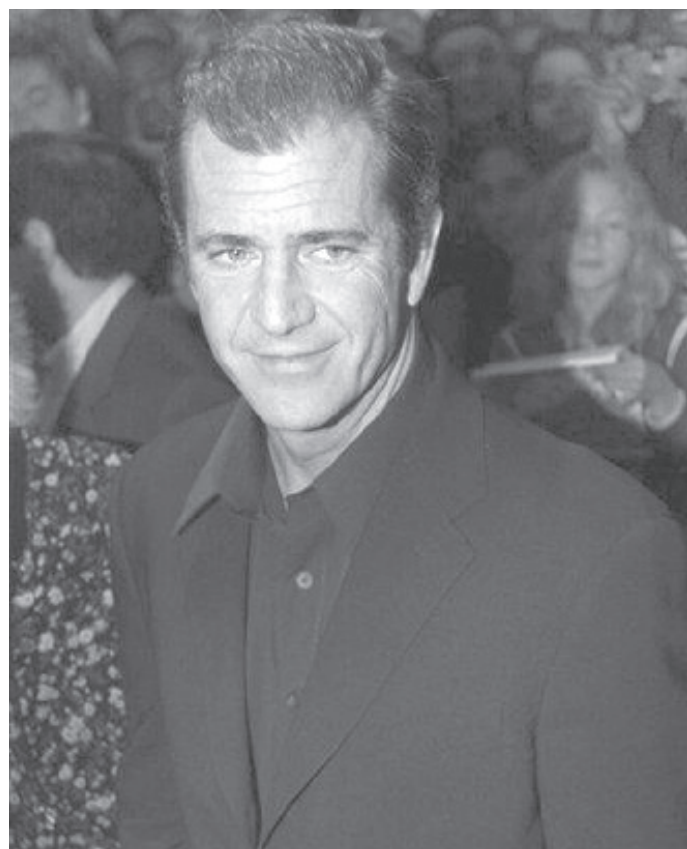
Gibson also told "Good Morning America" he had called Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Wednesday night to talk about the issue—but the governor told him he had to make a speech and would call back.

"Well, Arnold, I'm still waiting for your call," Gibson said.

Later, Schwarzenegger appeared puzzled.

"I don't know what this was all about," the governor said in Los Angeles.

"I did talk to him for several minutes and explained to him



Mel Gibson is shown in Sydney in this April 22, 2002, file photo.

what my position was on" the stem-cell proposal, the governor said. Schwarzenegger said he had to cut short the call because he had to give a speech in San Diego.

"After that, I called back at 9 o'clock and left a message on his phone," Schwarzenegger said. "He hasn't returned my call."

Gibson, a Roman Catholic, as is the governor, said when he first heard about the proposition he was overjoyed but changed his mind. Gibson said he had no faith in the cloning of human embryos but would support the

use of adult stem cells.

"I found that the cloning of human embryos will be used in the process and that, for me, I have an ethical problem with that," he said. "Why do I, as a taxpayer, have to fund something I believe is unethical?"

Earlier in the week, Brad Pitt voiced support of the measure.

"We have to make sure that we open up these avenues so that our best and our brightest can go find these cures that they believe they will find," the actor said. "Proposition 71 accomplishes this."

Azaria plays psychiatrist on 'Huff'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Huff, his wife and his dog are sleeping peacefully. Then the dog stirs, a security alarm goes off and Huff and Beth are suddenly wide awake, confronting the latest crisis in their lives.

This scene on a soundstage for Showtime's new series "Huff" seems an apt metaphor—it's all about waking up psychologically and emotionally.

Premiering 10 p.m. EST Sunday, the show stars Hank Azaria as Dr. Craig "Huff" Huffstodt, a psychiatrist who gets a new perspective on life after a gay teenage patient commits suicide in front on him.

Believe it or not, the show's a comedy, albeit an existential one.

"I got the concept somewhere from my own personal shrink. Yes, I admit I'm in therapy," says Bob Lowry, the creator and executive producer. "The suicide in Act One is Huff's wake-up call, if you will, which triggers him to not only be reflective and examine his life, but to make every attempt to embrace everything that is put before him on a daily basis."

"We don't flinch," Azaria says between scenes. "We don't look away. We explore mental illness, from the severe to the slight."

Azaria, too, is open about being in therapy, "on and off for 15 years." It's helped him through difficult times,

including his divorce from Academy Award winner Helen Hunt, star of the old sitcom "Mad About You" in which he had a recurring role as Nat, the dog walker.

Paige Brewster, last seen in the short-lived Fox sitcom "Andy Richter Controls the Universe," plays Huff's wife, Beth. Blythe Danner is his manipulative mother, Izzy. Oliver Platt plays his charming but substance-abusing best friend, and Andy Comeau his brother, an institutionalized schizophrenic.

"The Bob Newhart Show" from the '70s notwithstanding, there's always been a bias against developing TV shows about mental health professionals, says Robert Greenblatt, Showtime's president of entertainment.

"The feeling was that people outside New York and L.A. really don't go to shrinks, and if they do, there's a stigma and they don't want to admit they go," Greenblatt says.

But he thinks now "there is much more openness in the rest of the country to these kind of ideas about getting help and putting yourself on the right track as opposed to ignoring problems."

In 2002 Azaria starred in "Imagine That" as a comedy writer whose fantasies and marriage counseling sessions inspired his work, but NBC canceled the sitcom after just two episodes.

Lowry thinks Azaria is ideal

for Huff because he's both funny and "has great emotional depth ... someone who doesn't miss any of the subtleties."

While on hiatus between seasons of "Huff" (Showtime has already ordered a second year) Azaria will star in the stage musical "Monty Python's Spamalot," a spoof on the Camelot legend adapted from the British comedy troupe's 1975 movie "Monty Python and The Holy Grail."

Set to open on Broadway in March, the production is directed by Mike Nichols, who helmed the movie "The Birdcage" in which Azaria played houseboy to a gay couple.

As a kid, the New York-born Azaria memorized the script of "The Holy Grail." Acting out all the characters was an early example of his chameleonlike vocal skills, now famous because of his numerous voice portrayals on "The Simpsons."

Azaria won three Emmys for his work on the animated series and another for the 2000 ABC movie "Tuesdays with Morrie," co-starring the late Jack Lemmon.

He recently wrote, directed and starred in the short movie "Nobody's Perfect," about a man in possession of magic glasses that make him able to see how a relationship will end.

It's a concept he says was prompted by an "older and wiser" attitude to dating again after his divorce.

Wary consumer warns others to beware of Internet scams

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I have been hit on by scam artists more than once. They must think I have "sucker" tattooed on my forehead.

The latest has been a series of e-mails telling me that a Mrs. Virginia of the United Kingdom was killed in a car accident, and I am the sole beneficiary of her \$12.5 million estate. All I have to do is provide them with my bank account number, and the money will be transferred from the Habib Trust Bank of England.

Well, I'm not stupid. I gave them the account number of a bank I no longer do business with. There is a grand total of \$2.83 in that account. They are welcome to it—have a cup of coffee and a scone on me.

Their scam promises they'll do all the paperwork— but after a while they'll tell you that you either have to send an advance of several thousand dollars to "complete the transaction," or go to Nigeria to sign the papers. This going to Nigeria gets better: They'll tell you that you don't need a visa to go there, as they will "take care of all that." But as soon as you land in Nigeria, you'll be arrested for NOT having a visa.

So, Abby, please warn your readers if they receive any type of e-mail, or regular mail, or even a phone call to that effect, they should explain it all to the Secret Service like I did. No one should fall for this trap. I'll get \$12.5 million when I am next in line to become the pope. I've got a better chance of coming into money by playing the lottery.

EUGENE B., CLIFTON, N.J.

DEAR EUGENE: I assume from your letter that you're not waiting for a visit from the College of Cardinals. I'm sure my readers will be grateful for the warning, as well as the reminder that most things that seem too good to be true—usually aren't.

□ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: I'm the mother of two sons who are as different as night and day. My 27-year-old, "Ken," has lots of issues and drama. Our relationship has always been rocky. Nothing I have ever done has been good enough.

Ken calls me on the phone and calls me names. I have gone through years of therapy and am doing pretty well, but when I have contact with him I regress 13 years.

We hadn't spoken since Christmas because I stopped answering the phone when he called. However, last night I did pick up. Our conversation started out well, but it peaked to a horrible yelling contest. Ken called me terrible names and blamed me for everything bad that has happened in his life.

I love Ken, but I don't like him. Is there a way a parent can cut the apron strings? What kind of impact would that have on him? I go to church and sit alone and pray. It gives me some relief. But when he calls, it starts all over again. What is a mother to do?

GRIEVING IN TEXAS

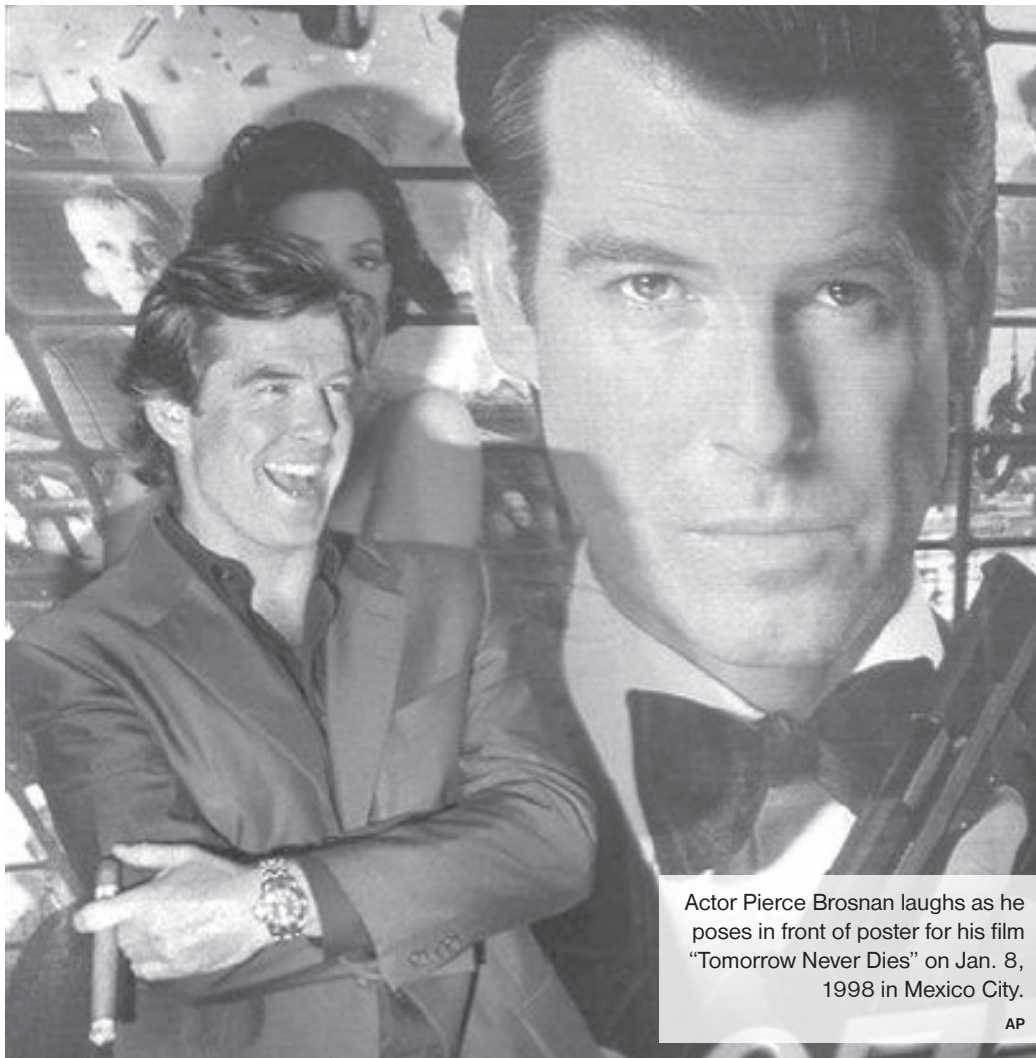
DEAR GRIEVING: You say that you have had counseling. Has your son? If the answer is no, urge him to get some and get his life in order. Should he refuse, make it plain that you will no longer tolerate his verbal abuse and again screen your calls. The longer you allow your son to cause you pain, the longer he will do it. He's an adult, and you have suffered enough.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



Dear Abby



Actor Pierce Brosnan laughs as he poses in front of poster for his film "Tomorrow Never Dies" on Jan. 8, 1998 in Mexico City. AP

Brosnan favors Colin Farrell as Bond

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP)—Pierce Brosnan, who played British agent James Bond in the last four "007" films, says he thinks fellow Irishman Colin Farrell would be his ideal successor.

Brosnan, 51, said several actors could ably fill his shoes as Bond, which he began in 1995 with "GoldenEye" and concluded with 2002's "Die Another Day."

"But I'll give it to Colin Farrell. He'll eat the head off them all," Brosnan said following an entertainment awards ceremony Saturday in Dublin.

Farrell, 28, appeared with Tom Cruise in the 2002 sci-fi thriller, "Minority Report," and has the title role in Oliver Stone's upcoming "Alexander."

Brosnan didn't specify any

other actors that he thought would make a good 007.

He also said he was discussing a possible collaboration with director Quentin Tarantino, who is considering making a film of the Bond novel "Casino Royale."

"We have discussed things, Quentin and I, but I don't know if it's going to be that particular project," Brosnan said.

Calif. AG supports Jackson prosecutor

LOS ANGELES (AP)—California's attorney general has urged the judge in the Michael Jackson child molestation case to reject a bid by the pop star to remove the Santa Barbara County prosecutor's office from the case.

State Attorney General Bill Lockyer called the request "baseless" and said it was premised on "conjecture and unfounded speculation."

Jackson's lawyers allege that District Attorney Tom Sneddon is "blinded by his zeal to convict Michael Jackson," creating a conflict of interest that would prevent Jackson from receiving a fair trial.

Jackson has pleaded not guilty

to child molestation, conspiracy and in a motion filed Thursday, Lockyer responded that Jackson's lawyers failed to show

the district attorney's "zeal" in prosecuting the charges stemmed from anything but an "impartial consideration of the case."

As with the majority of documents in the case, Lockyer's full motion was sealed

but an edited version was posted on the court's Web site.

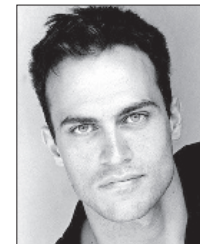
Jackson's attorney Steve Cochran, in a motion filed Oct. 8, accused Sneddon of having a vendetta against Jackson dating back to a 1993 molestation

investigation that never resulted in charges being filed.

Jackson's attorneys were particularly concerned about what they decried as Sneddon's "smug" and "jocular" manner during a news conference in which he announced Jackson's arrest.

Lockyer wrote that even if Sneddon had personal animosity toward Jackson, that would not be enough to show a conflict of interest or warrant his removal.

"In sum, all of the defendant's baseless allegations are based on surmise, conjecture and unfounded speculation," Lockyer wrote.



Jackson

Understudy gets lead in 'All Shook Up'

NEW YORK (AP)—The understudy has gotten the gig. Cheyenne Jackson, who understudied the lead in "All Shook Up," has taken over the starring role in the Broadway-bound musical that uses songs by Elvis Presley.

Jackson replaces Jarrod Emick, who left the show because of a contract dispute.

"In the end, we simply could not agree on the terms," producer Jonathan Pollard said in a statement. "The entire production team regrets that

Jarrod won't be with us, as we have great respect for his ability and wish him well. We also feel incredibly fortunate that we didn't have to look very far for his successor."

"All Shook Up," which opens March 24 at Broadway's Palace Theatre, tells the story of a mysterious, guitar-playing stranger who brings romance and rock 'n' roll into the life of a small-town girl, played by Jenn Gambatese. The show, with a book by Joe DiPietro, is directed by

Christopher Ashley. Preview performances begin Feb. 20.

Jackson has appeared on Broadway in such musicals as "Thoroughly Modern Millie" and "Aida," where he understudied lead roles in both shows.

"All Shook Up" features such Presley classics as "Heartbreak Hotel," "Love Me Tender," "Don't Be Cruel" and "Hound Dog." The show will try out in Chicago, playing a five-week engagement Dec. 19-Jan. 23 at the Cadillac Palace Theatre.

Quentin Tarantino plans kung-fu film in Chinese

LONDON (AP)—Director Quentin Tarantino says he's planning a kung-fu film with all the dialogue in Mandarin Chinese and out-of-sync English dubbing in homage to many such films in the past.

In an interview with Total Film magazine, Tarantino said he decided to do the kung-fu movie instead of "Inglorious Bastards," the working title of his long-expected movie based on World War II.

"I enjoyed shooting all the Japanese stuff in 'Kill Bill' so much that this whole film will be entirely in Mandarin," he was quoted as saying.

"If you're not up to watching it with subtitles, I really want to do a full-on dubbed version," he added.



Tarantino

Peggy Ryan, star of movie musicals, dies

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Peggy Ryan, who teamed with dance partner Donald O'Connor in movie musicals such as "This Is the Life" and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," has died at age 80.

Ryan died Saturday in Las Vegas' Sunrise Hospital, said hospital spokeswoman Cheryl Smith. The cause was complications from two strokes, friend Dottie Fusch said.

Ryan, who taught tap dancing and produced revues in Las Vegas for the last several years, was teaching and performing until several days before entering the hospital, Fusch said.

Ryan danced and acted in more than two dozen films, but her most memorable roles were with O'Connor. The duo became known for high-energy, complex routines in films like "Mister Big" in 1943 and 1944's "Chip Off the Old Block," "The Merry Monahans" and "Bowery to Broadway."

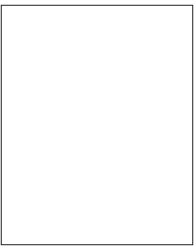
Her final movie was "All Ashore" with Mickey Rooney in 1953.

In 1969, Ryan began starring in the television police drama "Hawaii Five-O" as Jenny Sherman, secretary to Jack Lord's Steve McGarrett.

She was born Margaret O'Rene Ryan on Aug. 28, 1924, in Long Beach, Calif. By age 3, she was dancing professionally in her parents' vaudeville act.

Ryan's television appearances included the 1948 premieres of two variety shows, Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" and Milton Berle's "Texaco Star Theater."

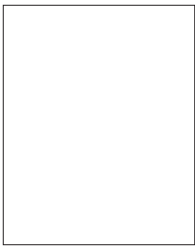
Ryan is survived by her daughter, Kerry English, son, Sean Sherman, and five grandchildren.



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